

Title	Suffering in the Christian Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas: On Caring for the Disabled in a Community (Abstract)
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Abstract

Suffering in the Christian Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas: On Caring for the Disabled in a Community

Yoko Kito

This study explores Stanley Hauerwas' argument for a moral commitment to the disabled in his Christian ethics. Hauerwas recently addressed the issue of caring for the disabled in a community. He published a book titled *Living Gently in a Violent World* in 2008, in collaboration with Jean Vanier. The latter founded L'Arche communities, where people with intellectual disabilities and those who provide them support live together, sharing care and need and constituting a community. According to Hauerwas' concept of narrative, the constitutive concept of a Christian community, people with disabilities acquire an accomplished character through experiencing suffering and contingency. Christians consider life as a gift, including disabilities. Hauerwas criticizes Martha Nussbaum's "capabilities approach." In liberal political theory including "capabilities approach," the framework of society is imagined without considering the contingencies or the role of chance inherent in human life. A liberal society has no criterion for valuing a caring relationship with the disabled, and thus guarantees neither care for the disabled, nor moral and ethical involvement. The issue of caring for the disabled is also related to medicine, the primary purpose of which is to cure illness by all possible means. Hauerwas points out the limitation of medicine today, as it aims not to care for patients but only to cure them. In contrast, it is more important and realistic for the disabled to be cared for than to be cured. For example, medical progress in a liberal society could lead to aborting children with disabilities, if people do not share the common value of having children in a community. Hauerwas points to the political significance of gentleness, which is rooted in a relationship with God. This gentleness must be part of the politics of living with the disabled. For example, the practice of L'Arche realizes gentleness, and Hauerwas sees L'Arche as a prophetic witness and an example of seeing the world differently.